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I.—PETRARCH'S *AFRICA* ¹

Petrarch's *Africa* is the poem which won for him the honor of being crowned with the laurel at Rome—an honor which he says he was the first to receive since the time of Statius²—the poem on which, rather than on his wonderful Italian sonnets, he based his chief hopes of future fame.

It was written about the middle of his life; but though he often returned to the subject in the next thirty years, and spent much time in revising and polishing his work, he never regarded it as quite finished, and it was never published in his lifetime.

The poem as we have it (in nine books) is manifestly incomplete. Certainly, there is a considerable gap in the story between the Fourth and Fifth books. Apparently there is another gap in the Ninth book, after line 215. And both the Fourth and the Ninth book are unusually, or suspiciously, brief. That is, the Fourth book has only 388 lines, the Ninth, 477, while the Eighth has 1,084, the Seventh, 1,130. In all, there are about 6,730 lines. The complete poem may have been in twelve books—like the *Aeneid*, or the *Thebais*.

In the year 1339, while living in retirement at Vacluse, Petrarch conceived the plan of writing a Latin poem on the life and deeds of Scipio Africanus. Beginning at once, he worked at his task for a time with such feverish zeal, that his health was impaired by too close application to his work (*Fam.* xiii, 7); but he soon dropped the subject entirely. Even while he was

¹ *Africa Francisci Petrarchae nunc primum emendata, curante Francisco Corradini, Padova, 1874.*

² On the 'crowning' of Statius, see E. K. Broadus, *Nation* (N. Y.), July 22, 1915.

engaged on the early books, the fame of the forthcoming poem had spread abroad; and on one and the same day (Sept. 1, 1340) he was offered the poet's crown by the Roman Senate and by the University of Paris. He could thus compare himself with the powerful king Syphax, whose friendship was courted at the same time by both Carthage and Rome (*Ad Post.*; *Fam.* iv, 4). After careful consideration he decided to accept the honor at Rome—"super cineribus antiquorum vatum, inque illorum sede" (*Fam.* iv, 6). But before going to Rome, he visited his friend and patron King Robert at Naples. To him he read the early books of the poem, and promised to dedicate the whole work to him when it was completed. Then he went to Rome, and there he received the poetic crown, April 8, 1341, 'Paschali die' (*Ad Post.*; *Fam.* iv, 8 and 6). Later in the same year he suddenly returned to the subject of his *Africa*, and completed the poem in a very short time: "tanto ardore opus illud, non magno in tempore, ad exitum deduxi,³ ut ipse quoque nunc stupeam" (*Ad Post.*).

The subject of the poem is Scipio's achievements in Africa during the later years of the Second Punic War. And hence its name.

After calling upon the Muses and invoking the Saviour of the world, the poet commends his poem to King Robert of Sicily. Some day, with ripened powers, he will sing of the King's own achievements. (Cp. the dedication of Statius' *Thebais*, i, 22-33.)

He then sets forth the causes of the Punic Wars, much in the manner of Livy (21, 1): the Carthaginian jealousy of the power of Rome, the bitter feeling caused by the harsh terms imposed after the First war, and the natural rivalry of the two great powers. Spain, especially, because of its position, was a bone of contention between the two peoples—like a sheep mauled by wolves:

Haud aliter quam quum medio deprensa luporum
Pinguis ovis nunc huc rapidis, nunc dentibus illuc
Volvitur, inque tremens partes discerpitur omnes,
Bellantum proprioque madens resupina cruore.

The action of the poem begins with the year 206, when the

³ Cp. the expression at the close of the poem (9,421), "O mea non parvo mihi consummata labore Africa."

Carthaginians had been driven out of Spain—Hasdrubal fleeing like a deer looking back upon his pursuers (cp. Horace, *Od.*, i, 15, 29-31)—and Scipio was preparing to carry the war into Africa. Scipio's father appears to him in his sleep, still bearing the marks of his wounds—as Hector once appeared to Aeneas (*Aen.* ii, 270)—and takes him up to the stars. From there he points out the walls of Carthage, and foretells his son's great victory (Cp. Cic. *Somn.* 2, 3).

It should be said here that Petrarch's first two books are largely a very clever adaptation of Cicero's *Dream of Scipio*.⁴ That is, the famous vision of the Younger Scipio, who conquered Carthage in the Third Punic War, is transferred two generations back, and assigned to Scipio Africanus. So that a summary of these first two books will give a good many things which are already familiar to the reader of Cicero's prose—or to the student of Chaucer's *Parlement of Foules*.

Thus, in Petrarch's story, the father of Africanus tells of his own defeat and death, in Spain, and of his brother's death (cp. Livy, 25, 32-36). "We were much together in life, and in death we were not long divided. And now we look down with an easy contempt on the scene of our former existence."

Then Africanus asks (cp. *Somn.* 3, 6), "Do you call this life, which we on earth call death?" And his father replies, "The only true life is the life after death:

Dic tamen hoc, o sancte parens, an vivere fratrem
Teque putem, atque alios quos pridem Roma sepultos
Defunctosque vocat? Lente pater ipse loquentem
Risit, et: O quanta miseri sub nube iacetis,
Humanumque genus quanta caligine veri
Volvitur! Haec, inquit, sola est certissima vita,
Vestra autem mors est quam vitam dicitis.

Nay, behold my brother, and the long line of heroes behind you. Will any one dare tell me these are dead?" Then the father points out Marcellus, Crispinus, Fabius, Sempronius Gracchus, Aemilius Paulus, and a host of others who had fallen for their country—

⁴ Another Italian imitation of Cicero's *Somnium* may be found at the close of Matteo Palmieri's treatise *Della Vita Civile* (c. 1430).

Scilicet, immenso studio dum laedere quaerit,
Civibus atque inopem spoliat dum fortibus urbem,
Complevit caelum nostris ferus Hannibal umbris.

The death of Paulus is told at length (after Livy, 22, 49) :

Cannensi Romana die defleta supremum
Fata putans renuit cladi superesse, sed ultro
Oblatum contempsit equum, multumque rogantem
Reppulit et, "Nimium," respondit, "viximus; at tu
Macte animi virtute, puer; discede tuumque
Victurum abde caput teque ad meliora reserva.
Dic patribus muniant urbem, dic moenia firment;
Condiscant extrema pati, namque improba saevas
Ingeminat Fortuna minas, hostisque cruentus
Victor adest. Fabio mea verba novissima perfer:
Dic me iussorum memorem vixisse suorum,
Dic memorem te teste mori: sed fata feroxque
Collega ingenti turbarunt cuncta tumultu.
Nuda loco caruit virtus; tulit impetus illam.
Effuge, dum morior, ne forsán plura loquendo
Sim tibi causa necis." Dicentem talia ferro
Circumstant; volat ille levis; timor allevat artus
Et plumas adiungit equo et calcaria plantis.

Then Africanus addresses his uncle, and asks, "If there is life beyond the grave, if there is life eternal, while the life we know is like unto death, why do I linger upon the earth? Why does not my soul leave the earth, and fly hither?" "Nay," replied the other; "man must live out his allotted time on earth, and not desert the post of duty.⁵ 'Tis justice and piety that open the way to heaven. Nothing is dearer to the gods than patriotic service."

Then the uncle points out the seven kings of Rome (cp. Florus, 1, 1-8)—all except the last wicked king, who has no place here—the three Horatii, Publicola, and all the mighty throng that dwell in the Milky Way (cp. *Somn.* 3, 8). But the night is passing, and there is not time to tell of them all. Only, the father adds, all these served their country well.

In the Second book, Africanus asks what Fate has in store for him, and his father foretells the remaining events of the war—the recall of Hannibal from Italy, his attempt to make terms

⁵ Cp. Cicero, *Somn.* 3, 7, *T. D.* i, 74; Plato, *Phaedo*, 62 B; Spenser, *F. Q.* i, 9, 41; Tennyson, *Lucretius*, 146.

with the Romans, his defeat at Zama, his flight to King Antiochus, and his death at the court of Bithynia. "And there will be other wars for Rome. You yourself will be known in the East, as well as in the West and South." Then he foretells various civil and foreign wars, down to the taking of Jerusalem. But he breaks off before telling of the decline of the Empire. Still, even in the later evil days the name of Rome will never be lost:

Vivet honos Latius, semperque vocabitur uno
Nomine Romanum imperium.

Even in her fall she will be like an aged lion—old, but still a lion, and still the monarch of the forest:

nam Roma potentibus olim
Condita sideribus, quamvis lacerata malorum
Consiliis manibusque, diu durabit, eritque
Has inter pestes nudo vel nomine mundi
Regina; hic nunquam titulus sacer excidet illi.
Qualiter annosum vires animusque leonem
Destituunt, sed prisca manet reverentia fronti
Horrificusque sonus; quamquam sit ad omnia tardus,
Umbra sit ille licet, circum tamen omnis inermi
Paret silva seni.

Then the father breaks off, and leads his son down toward the earth. The morning star was high behind them, and yet the two of them cast but a single shadow—"tamen una erat umbra duorum" (cp. Dante, *Purg.* 3, 19-21).

Here the father makes a final statement to his son (cp. *Somn.* 6-7); the stars stopped in their course to listen. "All earthly fame is fleeting. See how small the earth is, like a tiny island set in the middle of the 'mighty' Ocean. Surely, it offers no great room for fame. And yet, small as it is, it is not all habitable for men. Indeed, we are really confined to a single one of the five zones. And no man's fame can extend even over the whole of this. The praises of men will perish. This is the only real life, this eternal life of ours, which is the reward of virtue and uprightness. Even monuments of marble will perish in time, even books are mortal; but your fame will not be wholly lost. Even now I see a Tuscan youth coming after many centuries, like a second Ennius, to tell of your deeds. Both he and

Ennius are dear in my sight; but Petrarch will deserve the greater gratitude, for he will write of us without hope of favor or reward, moved only by admiration for great deeds and a love of truth:

Cernere iam videor genitum post saecula multa
 Finibus Etruscis iuvenem, qui gesta renarret,
 Nate, tua, et nobis veniat velut Ennius alter.
 Carus uterque mihi, studio memorandus uterque:
 Iste rudes Latio duro modulamine Musas
 Intulit, ille autem fugientes carmine sistet.
 Et nostros vario cantabit uterque labores
 Eloquio, nobisque brevem producere vitam
 Contendet; verum multo mihi carior ille est
 Qui procul ad nostrum reflectet lumina tempus.
 In quod eum studium non vis pretiumve movebit,
 Non metus aut odium, non spes aut gratia nostri,
 Magnarum sed sola quidem admiratio rerum,
 Solus amor veri.

And yet, as I have said, even books are mortal. Again, how many famous men there are in the distant East and South of whom you have never heard. Your fame is hemmed in by narrow bounds. Therefore scorn the favor of men, and look for your eternal reward in heaven. As for glory, it is the shadow of virtue, and it follows the good man even though he cares not for it (cp. Cic. *T. D.* 1, 45, 109; Seneca, *Ep.* 79, 13; Claudian, 17, 7). Be faithful to your country, and to your friends; there is nothing better than a friend. Laelius is your friend now, another Laelius will be the special friend of your grandson. Your last days will be saddened, you will die in exile, and refuse to be buried at Rome."

Then the daylight came, the trumpet blew, and the dream was done:

Buccina castrorum cecinit, sonituque tremendo
 Attonitum subito somnusque paterque reliquit.

Book III. Scipio sends Laelius to Africa, to win over Syphax to an alliance with the Romans (cp. Livy, 28, 17, 1-12). Laelius proceeds to the rich palace of Syphax—which is described in detail:

puro nil vilius auro
 Agnoscit, pedibusque premit quae cara putantur.

It is adorned with pictures of the heavenly bodies, of the signs of the Zodiac, and of the Gods and heroes (cp. Ovid's description of the Palace of the Sun, *Met.* ii, 1-18). The Three Graces, it may be noted, are portrayed in their conventional attitude:

nudisque tribus comitata puellis,
Quarum prima quidem nobis aversa, sed ambae
Ad nos conversos oculos vultusque tenebant
Innexae alternis per candida brachia nodis.⁶

And Mercury is depicted with his bride Philology seated at his side—an indication that Petrarch was familiar with the curious fancy of Martianus Capella, of the marriage of Mercury and Philology.

Syphax is favorably impressed by Laelius' message, and by the presents he brings, but says, "Let Scipio himself come and visit me here—*faciatque fidem praesentia famae.*" Then follows a banquet, at which Laelius sits like Ulysses at the banquet of Alcinous:

Talis apud mensas (nisi testem spernis Homerum)
Coena fit Alcinoi: sedet illic blandus Ulysses,
Laelius hic hospes mellito affabilis ore.

A youthful minstrel sings of the history of the region: of Hercules and Antaeus, of Atlas, and Medusa, and Dido,⁷ and Carthage—down to the present crisis (cp. *Aen.* 1, 740-46).

Then Laelius is urged to tell something of the history of Rome. "That is a long story," he replies, "and our annals are far from complete. Indeed, we Romans have always been more concerned with making history than with writing it—

⁶Cp. Boccaccio, *Geneal. deor. gentil.* v, 35; 'E. K.' on Spenser, *S. C.* iv, 109; Petrus Philippus Assirellius, *Carmina* (Florence, 1597), p. 18, Hae Charites donum laetantur reddere duplex; | Unde duae vultum, terga dat una soror; Alciati, *Emblema* 153, Gratus | Foenerat; huic remanent una abeunte duae.

⁷The African minstrel follows what seems to have been a common African version of the death of Dido: "Mox aspernata propinqui | Coniugium regis, quum publica vota suorum | Urgerent, veteris non immemor illa mariti | Morte pudicitiam redimit." Petrarch discusses the matter at length in one of his Letters (*Sen.* iv, 4), and he follows this version himself in his *Trionfo della Castità*. Cp. Carlo Pascal, *Didone nella letteratura latina d'Africa, Athenaeum*, v, 285-293.

Scriptorum copia nunquam
 Romano fuit in populo, quos Graius abunde
 Orbis habet. Nostris facere est, quam scribere, multo
 Dulcius, atque aliis laudanda relinquere facta,
 Quam laudare alios."*

Still, he gives a brief sketch of Aeneas, and Romulus, and a long list of heroes, of Curtius, the Decii and Regulus, who gave their lives for their country—

Quamquam quid genera atque viros memorare necesse est,
 Quum saepe ad certam legiones currere mortem
 Viderimus monstrante duce et sua fata docente?*

"For this is the Roman way—

Romanum est, si nescis, opus, contemnere casus
 Fortuitos, placide venienti occurrere morti,
 Spernere quae gentes aliae mirantur et optant;
 Contra autem amplecti quae formidanda videntur,
 Vincere supplicia et tristes calcare dolores,
 Sponte mori potius quam turpem degere vitam.

(Cp. Livy, 2, 12, 9, et facere et pati fortia Romanum est.) You ask about our later kings, and the fall of the monarchy—our kings whom we once guarded as bees guard their king (cp. Verg. *Geor.* 4, 215-17). Then hear the story of Tarquinius and Lucretia and Brutus" (cp. Livy, 58-59).

Book IV. Syphax says, "But tell us of your great Scipio; tell us of your *dux modernus*." Then Laelius takes up the praises of his commander, his manly beauty, and his noble presence—"you won't be disappointed when you see him":

datur haec illi nam gloria soli;
 Nominibus quia quum noceat praesentia magnis,¹⁰
 Hunc super attollit—

* Cp. Sallust, *Cat.* 8, at populo Romano numquam ea copia fuit . . . optimus quisque facere quam dicere, sua ab aliis bene facta laudari quam ipse aliorum narrare malebat.

⁹ Cp. Cic. *T. D.* i, 37, 89 and 101; *C. M.* xx, 75.

¹⁰ Cp. *Fam.* 1, 1, "famae semper inimica praesentia est . . . Ego id uni omnium Africano tributum memini, ut scilicet et fama mirabilis et praesentia mirabilior haberetur"; Livy, 28, 18, mirabilioremque sibi eum virum congresso coram visum prae se ferebat quam bello rebus gestis." Corradini quotes Claudian, *Bell. Gild.* 385, "minuit praesentia famam."

his many good qualities of head and heart (Livy, 26, 50, 13)—

Vincitur ut caelo species telluris opacae,
Florida sic omnes tellus premit Itala terras;
Utque nitet caeli pars purior una sereni,
Italia sic Roma potens praefulget in ipsa;
Solque velut radiis fulgentia sidera vincit,
Scipio sic omnes superat—

the popular belief in his divine parentage, his daily visits to the temple of Jupiter (Livy, 28, 19). “He is now meditating an attack upon Carthage:

Omnia posse putat quae vult; quaecumque putavit
Posse, potest; igitur peragit quaecumque cupivit;
Optima sola tamen cupit et pulcherrima factu.

He saved his father's life in the engagement at the Ticinus (Livy, 21, 46); in the ‘shipwreck’ after Cannae he rallied his followers (Livy, 22, 53); he conquered Spain, he took New Carthage in a single day. Hear, too, his wise decision in the dispute about the mural crown (Livy, 26, 48)—‘*Nam prior est, quem nemo praeit*’—and his chivalrous treatment of the women captives (Livy, 26, 49).”

In Livy's account, 28, 17-18, Scipio himself visits Syphax, and forms an alliance with him. Then he goes back to Spain. All this in 206. Petrarch's Fifth book begins with the year 203; so that there is a gap here covering the events of three years. The complete poem must have outlined these events, and so prepared the reader for the beginning of the Fifth book, which takes up the story of Sophonisba. And especially it must have recorded the movements of the two rival Berber kings Masinissa and Syphax, and their relations to Carthage and Rome. For by this time Syphax has married Sophonisba, the daughter of Hasdrubal, and broken his alliance with Scipio, while Masinissa has also changed sides, and is now fighting on the side of Rome. And now Syphax has just been defeated and taken prisoner—largely through Masinissa's aid.

Book V. Masinissa, after the defeat and capture of Syphax, comes to Cirta, the city of Syphax (Livy, 30, 8-14). Sophonisba, the wife of Syphax, comes out to meet him. Her beauty is described in detail—with the use of many of the ‘conceits’

which Petrarch employed for the description of feminine beauty in his Sonnets.¹¹ She is a Carthaginian princess, very fair, with golden hair, a complexion of lilies and roses, with beautiful teeth, and wonderful eyes, etc., etc.

Stabat candore nivali

Frons alto miranda Iovi, multumque sorori
 Zelotypae metuenda magis, quam pellicis ulla
 Forma viro dilecta vago. Fulgentior auro
 Quolibet, et solis radiis factura pudorem
 Caesaries spargenda levi pendebat ab aura
 Colla super, recto quae sensim lactea tractu
 Surgebant
 Candida purpureis imitantur floribus almae
 Lilia mixta genae; roseis tectumque labellis
 Splendet ebur series mira, etc.

Masinissa is much impressed by her beauty:

Liquitur ille tuens captiva captus ab hoste,
 Victaque victorem potuit domuisse superbum.

(Cp. Livy, 30, 12; Hor. *Epp.* 2. 1, 156). She appeals to him to save her from falling into Roman hands. He offers to marry her himself, but she declines the honor:

Sed quia fata premunt, et nostris debitus annis
 Finis adest, mihi, care, animos attollere fractos
 Desine; non tali pelago convulsa ratis nat.

He promises that, if the worst comes to the worst, he will supply her with the means of death, and so help her to avoid captivity. He decides to marry her himself, and hastily does so—"we are a well-matched pair, and perhaps Scipio will not condemn me":

Non pulcrius orbe

Par fuerit toto, nisi nos oblivia formae
 Forte tenent nostrae; genus, et gens, omnia tandem
 Conveniunt.

Then we have the wedding night, with the bride's fears and disturbing visions (cp. *Aen.* 4, 460 ff.):

Illi non blanda mariti

Oscula mille novi, non regni iura vetusti
 Per cunctos promissa deos, de corde pavorem

¹¹ For details, see Corradini's commentary.

Funditus expulerant: semper tremefacta sepulcrum
Ante oculos mortemque tulit. Nec somnia laetum
Portendere aliquid. Visa est sibi nempe secundo
Rapta viro, sentire minas et iurgia primi;
Et tremuit, sopita licet.

The multitude disapproves of the whole hasty and irregular business (cp. *Aen.* 4, 172-197). Scipio hears of it, and prepares to rebuke the offender:

Sic pater offensus longinquo verbera nato
Instruit et thalamis irarum fulmina fundit,
Mox vultu placito et dulci sermone movendus.

Meanwhile a rumor spreads that Syphax is coming, as a captive, to the Roman camp. The multitude rushes out to see him—how fallen now:

Hunc illum bello ingentem regnisque superbum,
Romanum Poenumque ducem qui viderit uno
Tempore sub laribus pacem veniamque precantes, etc.

(Cp. Livy, 30. 13-14). Scipio reproaches him for broken faith, and Syphax replies—"sero vix longa silentia fregit"—"All my treachery, and all my downfall, are due to my Carthaginian wife (a daughter of Hasdrubal)."

Masinissa passes over to Scipio's camp. Scipio reasons with him, and rules that Sophonisba must be sent along with Syphax to Rome (Livy, 30, 14). Then, in a long passage which is one of the finest of the whole poem, Masinissa passes a troubled night lamenting his hopeless situation. At last he resolves to let Sophonisba die; he falls into a troubled sleep; morning comes; he calls a faithful slave, and sends her poison (Livy, 30, 15). She curses Scipio (as Dido curses Aeneas, *Aen.* 4, 607 ff.): "May he spend his last days in exile, may his brother suffer wrong, and his son be a poor thing, inglorious; may he have a mean tomb. May the grandsons of Masinissa fight against each other, and may Jugurtha be conquered by the Roman Marius." Then she drank the poison "like one athirst"—like Cicero's Theramenes, *T. D.* 1, 40, 96, "venenum ut sitiens obduxisset"—

Illa manu pateramque tenens et lumina coelo
Attollens, 'Sol alme,' inquit, 'Superique, valete;

Massinissa, vale, nostri memor.' Inde malignum
 Ceu sitiens haurit non mota fronte venenum,
 Tartareasque petit violentus spiritus umbras.¹²

Book VI. Sophonisba passes to the Stygian pools, where the Parcae and the other denizens of that region throng about her in amazement. This fancy is apparently taken from the beginning of the Eighth book of the Thebais, where the Parcae and the rest are startled by the sudden coming of Amphiaras—though the coming of Sophonisba was surely less unusual, in its cause and in its manner, than that of the warrior seer who was carried down to Tartarus alive and still arrayed in all the panoply of war.¹³ (In each case, too, the Infernal judges, Minos and Rhadamanthus, immediately set their minds on the appropriate sentence for the new-comer.) Minos orders that she be confined in the 'second' prison—with other people who threw away their lives (cp. *Aen.* 6, 434-6). Rhadamanthus concurs; but Aeacus says, "Nay, in the 'third.' Love caused her death; she was forced to die, and she has suffered much already" (cp. *Aen.* 6, 442 ff.). Here, in this 'third' prison, she sees Iphis and Biblis, and Myrrha, and Oenone, and Lavinia, and Thisbe, and other famous women who had died for love.

¹² The story of Sophonisba has often been brought upon the tragic stage, though it is hard to find any trace of the influence of Petrarch's poem. It is the subject of the first regular Italian tragedy, by Trissino (c. 1514). The best-known plays on the subject are by Mairet (1629) and Corneille (1663), in French, by Lohenstein (1666) and Geibel (1873), in German, and John Marston (1606) and James Thomson (1729), in English. The principal thing now remembered about Thomson's tragedy is that it contained a silly line:

Oh! Sophonisba, Sophonisba, Oh!

which was promptly parodied as:

Oh! Jemmy Thomson, Jemmy Thomson, Oh!

Perhaps the latest of the series is a tragedy in four acts by Alfred Poizat, presented by the Comédie-Française in 1913, in the ancient Roman theatre at Orange. It is published in *La Petite Illustration*, Paris, 2 Août, 1913.

¹³ Cp. Chaucer, *Troilus*, 2, 104, "How the bishop . . . Amphiorax fil thurgh the ground to helle." Corradini compares Petrarch's sonnet (ii. 75) "Gli angeli eletti e l'anime beate," etc.

Meanwhile, Scipio comforts Masinissa (cp. Livy, 30, 15). He gives him a horse and other gifts, and promises him greater things, a share in the coming triumph, a seat in the Roman Senate, etc. Masinissa is cheered by the larger hope—like the bird-catcher who loses a small bird, but is cheered by the approach of a larger one:

Ceū retibus auceps
Aspiciens volucrem subito discedere parvam
Conqueritur, movet exigui spes perdita lucri;
Maior inopina mox et generosior ales
Parte poli tensis si forsitan advolet alis,
Erigitur, recipitque animos, spesque ampla futuri
Praeteriti meminisse vetat; sic prima secundae
Cura parum solido sub pectore cessit amantis;
Victus amore amor atque libidine victa libido est.

That night he dreamed, not of Sophonisba, but of his future fortune:

Proxima nox alia transivit imagine somni:
Non habitus, non incessus, non vultus amicae
Ante oculos, non vox iterum exaudita gementis;
At solium atque urbes, at fortibus oppida muris,
Fluminaque et montes lati confinia regni.

Next morning Laelius sails for Rome, with his distinguished captive. His soldiers send messages to their friends at home. Syphax laments his fallen fortunes, and prays for death by shipwreck—like a man who has lost all his crops and hopes his neighbors will fare as ill:

Invidus haud aliter tenuis regnator agelli,
Annua cui messis periit spes, optat iniquum
Ver aliis imbresque feros et grandine mixtos
Arboribus frugibusque graves incumbere ventos.

Scipio advances, and takes up a position before Carthage. The Carthaginians send thirty envoys to him (Livy, 30, 16). Scipio offers them terms, which they profess to accept—like the faithless sailor who makes vows to the gods in time of stress, but forgets them when the danger is past. They wish to gain time, till Hannibal can come.

They send envoys to Italy to appeal to Hannibal to return (Livy, 30, 19). As he listens to their spokesman, he writhes like a charm-bound snake:

Ille perorantem querulo cum murmure semper
 Audierat, frendensque manus compresserat, et se
 Torserat; haud aliter quam carmina noxia serpens
 Et magicum murmur cursumque vetantia verba
 Quando audit, rauco violentus sibilat ore,
 Et sese in nodos sinuoso corpore versat.

His reply follows Livy, 30, 20. He slaughters the Italian soldiers who refused to follow him over the sea, and embarks in the transports that had long been in readiness in the roadstead of Croton. He regrets that he had not taken Bomilcar's advice, and marched at once from Cannae to Rome. (Livy says *Maharbal's* advice, 22, 51). He lays the blame for his failure in Italy on the Pacifists at home.

Sic tristis abibat
 Hannibal, et quarto linquebat littora lustrum
 Italiae possessa gemens; nec tristior unquam
 Vel patriam quisquam vel dulces liquit amicos,
 Quam patriam petit ille suam; sibi nempe videri
 Exul ab hostili iussus regione reverti.

Sailing past the 'toe' of Italy—"Italicae transmisso pollice plantae"—he passes Scylla, and Aetna, and Syracuse, and Pachynum. An old steersman recalls the story of Xanthippus (cp. Val. Max. 9, 6).

Meanwhile Laelius has delivered the captive Syphax at Rome, and sets out on his return to Africa. But it is reported that envoys are coming from Carthage, and he is recalled. He returns unwillingly:

sic dulcia carae
 Limina cum peteret iuvenis male sanus amicae,
 Si pater aut genetrix retrahant, vestigia fleat
 Lenta dolens, pactamque timens amittere noctem.

The Senate meets outside the city, in the temple of Bellona. The Punic envoys are granted a hearing, and dismissed 'sine pace, sine foedere, sine responso' (Livy, 30, 22-23). Fulvius and Laelius are sent to report the Senate's decision to Scipio.

A Roman fleet is wrecked on its way from Sicily to Africa (Livy, 30, 24), and some of the ships are looted near Byrsa. Scipio sends three 'orators' to protest against this breach of the armistice; these are attacked by the Carthaginian mob. They

get back to their ships, but are attacked by three hidden vessels; they run aground and escape (Livy, 30, 25).

Meanwhile Laelius returns from Rome with the Carthaginian envoys. Scipio dismisses the envoys, and prepares for battle (Livy, 30, 25). Mago, the brother of Hannibal, sails from Genoa; but he has been sorely wounded, and he dies on his way home. He moralizes on the folly of man's ambition, on the vanity of earthly glory:

Hic postquam medio iuvenis stetit aequore Poenus,
 Vulneris increscens dolor et vicinia durae
 Mortis agens stimulis ardentibus urget anhelum.
 Ille, videns propius supremi temporis horam,
 Incipit: "Heu qualis fortunae terminus altae est!
 Quam laetis mens caeca bonis! Furor ecce potentum
 Praecipiti gaudere loco: status ille procellis
 Subiacet innumeris, et finis ad alta levatis
 Est ruere. Heu tremulum magnorum culmen honorum,
 Spesque hominum fallax, et inanis gloria fictis
 Illita blanditiis! Heu vita incerta labori
 Dedita perpetuo! semperque heu certa, nec unquam
 Sat mortis provisa dies! Heu sortis iniquae
 Natus homo in terris! Animalia cuncta quiescunt;
 Irrequietus homo perque omnes anxius annos
 Ad mortem festinat iter. Mors, optima rerum,
 Tu retegis sola errores et somnia vitae
 Discutis exactae: video nunc quanta paravi
 Ah miser! incassum; subii quot sponte labores,
 Quos licuit transire mihi. Moriturus ad astra
 Scandere quaerit homo; sed mors docet omnia quo sint
 Nostra loco. Latio quid profuit arma potenti,
 Quid tectis inferre faces? Quid foedera mundo
 Turbare atque urbes tristi miscere tumultu?
 Aurea marmoreis quidve alta palatia muris
 Erexisse iuvat, postquam sic sidere laevo
 Sub divo periturus eram? Carissime frater,
 Quanta paras animis, heu fati ignarus acerbi
 Securusque mei!" Dixit: tum liber in auras
 Spiritus egreditur, spatiis unde altior aequis
 Despiceret Romam, simul et Carthaginis urbem;
 Ante diem felix abiens, ne summa videret
 Excidia, et claris quod restat dedecus armis,
 Fraternosque suosque simul patriaeque dolores.¹⁴

¹⁴The thirty-four lines on the death of Mago have a special history of their own. In 1343 Petrarch gave them to a friend at Naples, under

Book VII. Hannibal is sailing homeward, ignorant of his brother's death:

Atque supervacuis ignarus pectora veri
 Implicuit curis: volueris velut anxia, nido
 Pabula dum cumulet, memori torquetur amore
 Assiduoque fremit studio, et suspenditur alis,
 Quum tamen interea generis spem forte malignus
 Abstulerit natos atque incunabula pastor.

His look-out reports that the wind is carrying them straight upon a broken tomb. They change their course, and land, by rowing, near Leptis (Livy, 30, 25).

Meanwhile there was much uneasiness at Rome. Fabius had prophesied that Hannibal would be a more dangerous foe in Africa than in Italy (Livy, 30, 28).

Hannibal passes from Leptis to Zama. He sends scouts to Scipio's camp. These are captured, shown everything, and sent back in safety (Livy, 30, 29). He asks for a personal conference with Scipio in the hope of obtaining better terms of peace. This is granted, and they meet. Each hastily thinks of the other's prowess—"oculi trepidantis in ictu." Their two speeches are based on Livy, 30, 30-31. The speakers part—as two horn-locked bulls separate, only to meet again. They fire the spirits of their followers—as two farmers separate to set fire to different fields of stubble. The soldiers prepare for battle:

a strict pledge of secrecy. But the friend promptly forgot his pledge, and the passage was soon widely copied and distributed, and so was handed on in a good many MSS. And Petrarch records that it was severely criticized, on the ground that the sentiment and tone were not in keeping with the time, the place, or the speaker (*Sen.* 2, 1). In 1781 a French editor, J. B. Lefèvre, claimed the lines for Silius Italicus, and actually printed them in an edition of the *Punica* (after xvi, 27). (Apparently, even in 1781 a new editor liked to offer something new.) Lefèvre had found them, not in a MS of Silius at all, but in a collection of excerpta. Yet he professed to believe that Petrarch had a copy of the *Punica*, that he thought it the only one in existence, that he borrowed these thirty-four lines bodily, and deliberately suppressed the rest. In 1823 a verse translation of the passage was printed in Ugo Foscolo's *Essays on Petrarch*, and attributed to Lord Byron. In the following year the translation was claimed by Byron's friend, Thomas Medwin.

vario permixta fragore

Castra modis reboant miris: hic corrigit hastam,
Ille acuit gladios, agiles probat ille sagittas.
Induit hic galeam capiti, cristasque trementes
Excolit, hic blando permulcens murmure fortem
Frenat equum phalerisque tegit, studet ille recurvus
Ferratos aptare pedes, unguemque cavatum
Verberat, ac crebris tinnitibus inde favillas
Elicit, etc.

Here, after a special invocation of the Muses (as in Virgil, *Aen.* 7, 641 or 10, 163), the poet tells how Carthage and Rome appear before Jupiter and appeal to him (cp. Virg. *Aen.* 10, 1-117, the debate of Venus and Juno; also, Claudian, *Bell. Gild.* 17-212, the appeal of Rome and Africa to Jupiter). Jupiter replies that each of them will see her noble son die in exile. He foretells the Incarnation, and the establishment of the Roman Church; the country which is victorious in the coming battle will become the chief seat of his eternal empire—and that within the next 300 years.

Then we have the order of battle on both sides and the two generals' speeches, all based on Livy, 30, 32-33. The Roman trumpets sound the attack. Hannibal's elephants retreat and cause confusion. Hannibal fights like a boar at bay; Scipio rushes like a lion. Hannibal's forces are utterly broken, and he flees to Hadrumentum. Recalled to Carthage by the Senate, he avoids the sight of men, and hides himself in his own home (Livy, 30, 33-35).

Book VIII. After the battle the Romans plunder the Carthaginian camp. At the close of the day the victors appease their hunger, and talk over the battle. Laelius and Masinissa discuss Hannibal's escape. Scipio reviews the battle, and insists that Hannibal is a greater general than Alexander or Pyrrhus—greater as a soldier and as a man (Livy, 21, 4; 9, 18-19). Here, by a slight anachronism, the poet glances at a conversation held some years later between Hannibal and Scipio at Epheusus (Livy, 35, 14). So they draw out the first half of the night in talk, but at midnight they lie down to sleep:

Sic ubi tristis apes caelo commisit aperto
Impetus et magnae caedis pluit aether acervos,
Pars victrix repetit sedes procul hoste remoto,

Et circa regem coeunt ac murmure plaudunt;
 Postremum irriguo dant corpora lassa sopori,
 Atque omnes pariterque silent pariterque quiescunt.

On the other hand the Carthaginian leaders consult together, like the officers of a ship in a time of great danger. Hannibal's opinion is sought. At last he comes forth ashamed—like a virtuous matron who has suffered some great wrong. He advises them to sue for peace. He himself steals away (Livy, 33, 47)—to Antiochus, King of Syria, now warring at Ephesus. He passes Drepanum and Panormus, and Lipara. Near the Straits he becomes suspicious of his pilot Pelorus, and kills him. He regrets his hasty act, and buries him in Sicily (cp. Val. Max. 9, 8)—hence the name of the promontory, as Virgil's Misenus gave his name to Misenum.

Scipio advances to Utica, whence he goes out himself to inspect the defences of Carthage:

Invisam veluti cupiens prosternere rupem
 Cultor agri, aut segeti damnosam avellere quercum,
 It circum, tentatque modos, facilemque ruinam
 Cogitat innocuamque aliis campoque sibi.

Then he advances with his fleet to Tunis. Vermina, the son of Syphax, comes to avenge his father's defeat—he is ignorant of the destruction of Hannibal's army. His army is slaughtered, but he himself escapes (Livy, 30, 36). This is a final disaster to the Carthaginians:

Puppe velut fracta, remo quum tristis adhaesit
 Navita iactaturque vadis, cui litora longe,
 Spes fuste exiguo titubatur; si forte malignus
 Fluctus et hunc rapiat, mortem gemit atque secundum
 Naufragium; tanta ex parvis momenta supremum
 Tempus habet.

They send thirty envoys to Scipio at Tunis (Livy, 30, 36). Meanwhile, the Senate and people are terrified by many portents at Rome (Livy, 30, 38).

The consul Claudius sets sail for Africa, hoping to have equal authority there with Scipio. But even the elements resent his ambition. He is driven back by a great storm at sea, and is unable to resume his expedition before his year of office

expires (Livy, 30, 39). Meanwhile, news comes to Rome of the downfall of Hannibal.

The new consul Cornelius Lentulus tries to be sent to Africa, where he sees an opportunity of winning an easy credit, of reaping where he had not sown (Livy, 30, 40) :

Scilicet hoc meditans; seu pax instaret, haberi
Pacis honoratae princeps, seu bella manerent,
Perfacilem exhausti fore iam certaminis omnem
Eventum et praegrande decus. Sic ille labori
Incumbens alieno indignum ardebat honorem,
Semine non proprio messem rapturus opimam.

Here the poet makes a digression. "What foreign general, even unfettered by our Roman system of military command, ever accomplished as much as Scipio?" (Cp. Livy, 9, 18).

Rather than begin a long siege, which might give Lentulus a chance to share in the final victory, Scipio offers a premature peace (Livy, 30, 36) :

Sic villicus olim,
Nocturnos metuens fures, legit arbore poma
Immatura licet; sic pastor pendula ramis
Hospitia et nidos spoliât pullosque reportat
Implumes, properans serpentum avertere pestem.

His terms are stated as in Livy, 30, 37. The Carthaginians decide to accept them, for they think of the possibility of even harsher demands:

condensis volucris ceu vepribus haerens
Accipitrem super astantem videt anxia, nec se
Ausa movere loco, patitur laqueumque manumque
Aucupis: impendens tanti est differre periculum!

A second Carthaginian embassy is sent to Rome, headed by Hasdrubal Haedus. Lentulus, eager to prevent any peace except one of his own making, refuses to admit them to the city:

Sed Lentulus aeger
Ambitione sua, legatos arcuit urbe;
Nam belli cupidus Consul fugiebat honestum
Pacis iter.

The Senate meets them in the Temple of Bellona. Hasdrubal appeals for peace, on the terms which Scipio had offered (Livy,

30, 42). Peace is granted, he is admitted to the City, he makes a tour of it, and visits its monuments:

Non aliter stupuit, nisi falsa est fabula, caelum
 Ingrediens viridi subito translatus ab Ida
 Laomedonteus puer, ut vaga sidera circum
 Haesit et Iliacas despexit ab aethere silvas.

Here he sees not only the Pantheon—which can hardly have existed at that early date—but also the two colossal Horse Tamers on the Quirinale:

Praxitelis opus Phidiaeque insigne supremi.

He returns to Carthage. Scipio receives him, and the treaty is signed (Livy, 30, 43). Scipio distributes rewards and punishments (Livy, 30, 44). He orders that the Carthaginian fleet be burned, and sails for home.

Book IX. The Roman fleet is speeding joyously homeward, over a tranquil sea. Scipio calls upon the poet Ennius to sing and lighten the journey—"Ennius, assiduus rerum testisque comesque." Ennius prophesies that Scipio's fame will increase as the years go by. "The great king of Macedon envied Achilles for having a Homer to sing of his deeds (cp. Cic. *Arch.* 10, 24):

Macetum rex magnus aviti
 Forte videns saxum Aeacidæ titulosque sepulcri,
 'Fortunate,' inquit, 'iuvenis, cui nominis illum
 Praeconem reperire fuit.' Non parva profecto
 Est claris fortuna viris habuisse poetam,
 Altisonis qui carminibus cumulare decorem
 Virtutis queat egregiae monumentaque laudum.

You deserve a Homer to sing of your deeds, but you have only me. Perhaps in the years to come a proper poet will arise for you." "Say no more," says Scipio, "I shouldn't prefer Homer or Euripides to you."

Ennius discourses on the poet's task, and explains the meaning of the laurel, to the poet and to the general. Scipio urges him to sing now, for there is time to kill. Then Ennius begins, and all listen in silence. He tells of his long devotion to Homer, and of his recent conversation with Homer in a dream (cp. Cic. *Somn. Scip.* 1, 2; Lucr. 1, 124-126; Ennius, *Ann.* 1,

5 V). In his dream Ennius asks, "Who is yon youth I see sitting at Vaucluse?" And Homer replies, "That is Francesco Petrarca of Florence. He will recall the Muses from a long exile; he will be dear to Rome as a late-born son. Your friend Scipio will owe much to him, and he will be crowned on the Capitoline."

Then the evening falls, the sails are run up, and the wearied oarsmen are allowed to sleep.

After a special invocation of Calliope (cp. *Aen.* 7, 641; 10, 163) the poet tells of Scipio's triumph. Ennius rode at the victor's side, and the Muses had their share in the triumph:

Ennius ad dextram victoris, tempora fronde
Substringens parili, studiorum almaeque poesis
Egit honoratum sub tanto auctore triumphum.

(Cp. Claudian, 23, 15-20). "I myself, after 1500 years, have tried to do honor to Scipio on the Capitoline—have tried to fulfil Homer's prophecy concerning me. I shall not tell of Scipio's end, his fall from favor and his death in exile—not mar my tale with these sad things."

And then the *envoi*. "O my 'Africa,' while I toil over your pages, King Robert has died (Jan. 1343), my only hope and patron:

O mea non parvo mihi consummata labore
Africa, dum crescis, dum te relegensque comensque
Mulceo, magnanimum mors importuna Robertum
Intempestive mundo subtraxit egenti,
Et, mihi praerepta penitus dulcedine vitae,
Speratum tibi clausit iter.

Live, therefore, in retirement until a brighter day:

Donec ad alterius primordia veneris aevi.
Tunc iuvenesce, precor, quum iam lux alma poetis
Commodiorque bonis quum primum affulserit aetas."

This address of the poet to his poem was probably suggested by the closing lines of Statius' *Thebais*:

Durabisne procul dominoque legere superstes,
O mihi his senos multum vigilata per annos,
Thebai? etc.

The dedication of the poem (1, 19 ff.) should also be compared

with the dedication of the Thebais, 1, 22-33. Thus Petrarch has:

Tu quoque, Trinacrii moderator maxime regni,
Hesperiaeque decus atque aevi gloria nostri,
Ipse tuos actus meritis ad sidera tollam
Laudibus
Ingenium tentare libet . . .
Nunc teneras frondes humili de stipite vulsi
(Scipiade egregio primos comitante paratus)
Tunc validos carpam ramos, etc,

while Statius has:

Tuque, o Latiae decus addite famae,
Tempus erit, cum Pierio tua fortior oestro
Facta canam: nunc tendo chelyn satis arma referre
Aonia, etc.¹⁵

And Africa, 1, 27:

Praeterea in cunctos pronum sibi feceris annos
Posteritatis iter; quis enim damnare sit ausus
Quod videat placuisse tibi?

may be compared with Thebais, 12, 812-815:

iam certe praesens tibi Fama benignum
Stravit iter coepitque novam monstrare futuris.
Iam te magnanimus dignatur noscere Caesar,
Itala iam studio discit memoratque iuventus.

Such, then, is the general argument of Petrarch's poem. That is, the first two books are a very clever adaptation, and development, of Cicero's Dream of Scipio, while the remainder of the poem follows very closely the narrative of Livy. The Fifth book and the Ninth are the most original of the lot. The Fifth book works out the tragic story of Sophonisba, with a wealth of imaginative detail which could have had no place in Livy's prose, and the Ninth is really a sort of epilogue to the whole poem. But there are other original features, even in the other books. A good many of the speeches are Petrarch's own; and he has inserted a good many short similes, which are always apt and effective.

His Latinity is regularly excellent, though he allows himself

¹⁵ Cp. the dedication of Sannazaro's Fourth Eclogue, 7-17.

an occasional solecism—sometimes merely for metrical convenience. Thus he has *iuro . . . quod . . . persequar*, 3, 743; *scio quod*, 7, 412; *iactare . . . quod*, 8, 102; *fateare . . . ut*, 8, 191; *volvebam quod*, 9, 27. And, after the manner of his day, he sometimes uses *se* and *sibi* without any reflexive meaning—for example, four times in Bk. IX: 156, 243, 432, 445.

In the matter of quantity he is much less accurate and classical. (This point is discussed in Corradini's edition, pp. 92-93.) But here also some allowance should be made for the fact that he never published the poem himself, and never regarded it as quite finished.

His care to avoid using the exact language of classical models is well known—"sum quem similitudo delectet, non identitas" (*Fam.* 22, 2; cp. *Fam.* 23, 19). But there are one or two borrowed phrases in the *Africa* which escaped his revision. "Arrectaeque horrore comae," 1, 166, comes from Virgil, *Aen.* 4, 280. "Par nobile fratrum," 3, 118, comes from Horace, *Sat.* 2, 3, 243. The phrase "Cereris genero," 5, 553, is due to Juvenal, *Sat.* 10, 112; "sedesque quietas," 1, 209, to Lucretius, 3, 18.

And there are a few other phrases which are borrowed with only a slight modification: cp. 1, 25, "vacuas quod mulceat aures," with Horace, *Ep.* 1, 16, 26, "vacuas permulceat aures"; 2, 348, "umbra . . . estis pulvisque," with Horace, *Od.* 4, 7, 16, "pulvis et umbra sumus"; 8, 906, "Esquilias fessi dictumque a vimine collem," with Juvenal, 3, 7, "Esquilias dictumque petunt a vimine collem"; 6, 158, "nescit ut esse loco" (of a war-horse), with Virg. *Geor.* 3, 84, "stare loco nescit"; 6, 3, "ingens machina mundi," with Lucretius, 5, 96, "moles et machina mundi"; 3, 437, "ultima nunc bellis agitur ferventibus aetas," with Horace, *Epod.* 16, 1, "altera iam teritur bellis civilibus aetas"; 5, 753, "cari iniuria fratris," with Virg. *Aen.* 4, 354, "capitisque iniuria cari."

As for the special influence of particular classical models, there is very little to tell. The first guess the reader makes is almost certain to be wrong. If he thinks of the epic of Silius Italicus on the Second Punic War, and assumes that that was a natural model for Petrarch to follow when he wished to treat of the same subject, it need only be said that the poem of Silius

Italicus seems to have been quite unknown in the Middle Ages, and was not discovered till 1417. It was discovered by Poggio in a Swiss monastery, about 75 years after the *Africa* was written—about 43 years after Petrarch's death.

There is, however, another of the later Latin epics which Petrarch undoubtedly knew—the *Thebais* of Statius—and, as I have shown above, both the dedication and the close of the *Africa* have a close parallel in the corresponding parts of the *Thebais*. Moreover, the beginning of the Sixth book (about Sophonisba) is like the beginning of the Eighth book of the *Thebais* (about Amphiaraus). And Petrarch's use of simile is more in the manner of Statius than in that of any other Latin epic.

In the Seventh book of the *Africa*, Carthage and Rome appear before Jupiter, and appeal to him. This reminds one of the debate between Venus and Juno in the Tenth book of the *Aeneid*; but the particular thing which Petrarch had in his mind was probably a passage in Claudian where Rome and *Africa* appeal to Jupiter. This is in the *De Bello Gildonico*, 17 ff. Again, in the Ninth book the poet Ennius is introduced as accompanying Scipio on his African campaign and sharing in the general's triumph. This has been set down as one of Petrarch's own inventions; but he was merely following an express statement of Claudian—in the preface to his Third book on the Consulate of Stilicho. Compare, in particular, lines 87-88:

Quisquis enim se magna videt gessisse, necesse est
Diligat aeternos vates et carmina sacra,

with Claudian's preface, 5-6:

Gaudet enim virtus testes sibi iungere Musas;
Carmen amat quisquis carmine digna gerit.¹⁸

Corradini compares 4, 74, "*nominiбус quia quum noceat praesentia magnis*," with Claudian, 15, 385, "*minuit praesentia famam*." And there are several other fancies or phrases which suggest that Petrarch was very familiar with the poems of Claudian. Cp. 2, 486, "*illa (sc. Gloria) vel invitum, fugias*

¹⁸ Cp. Baptista Mantuanus, *Ecl.* 5, 155-6, *heroica facta* | *Qui faciunt reges heroica carmina laudant*.

licet, illa sequetur," with Claudian, 17, 7 "attamen invitam (sc. Virtutem) blande vestigat et ultro ambit Honor."¹⁷ The epithet in "sidereum iuvenem," 1, 115, is probably due to Claudian's "sidereusque gener," 17, 266; "te sine dulce nihil," 5, 622, may be a reminiscence of Claudian, 5, 268; and "Sardinia flatu pessima pestifero," 6, 239, recalls Claudian's mention of the "pestifer aer" of Sardinia, 15, 514.

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¹⁷ Cp. *Africa*, 2, 500, Gloria quae meritos sequitur, vel spreta, labores; Seneca, *Ep.* 79, 13, Gloria umbra virtutis est; etiam invitam comitabitur.